
7. Description

Inventory No.

Condition

<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> altered

Prepare both a one paragraph summary and a comprehensive description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

This brick veneer 1 ½ -story Tudor Revival features a steeply-pitched side-gabled roof. The three-bay house faces northwest toward Great Falls Road and is deeply set on its 1.57-acre lot. The enclosed area is approximately 1,300 square feet, not including the basement or attic space. The roof is covered with composition shingles and the foundation is brick. There is a mixture of original wood-sash double hung windows, some with storm windows, and synthetic-sash replacement windows. A long curving driveway sweeps in front of the house, providing access to a detached garage to the rear of the property. The lot features a number of mature trees but there are no front foundation plantings. The house has been vacant for at least two years.



Front façade and
driveway
entrance to 406
Great Falls Road



The house at 406 Great Falls Road features relatively little decorative detailing. Its steeply-pitched gable front entry extension and the Tudor-inspired arched doorway on the right bay are common in this style. The three-bay front façade includes right front-gabled projecting entry section, the central dormered section, and the side porch on the left. The front façade is dominated by the steeply pitched prominent cross gable that establishes its asymmetry. The wood battened front door has two small arched windows. A segmented brick arch consisting of three courses of headers outlines the door and six-light windows flank it. Window openings have soldier-course lintels and brick sills and are not shuttered. The entrance is accessed by two brick steps with a fieldstone landing outlined by brick. Above the door, on the second story, is a single 6/6 double-hung wood sash window, also with brick soldier-course lintel and sill.

The center bay includes a triple, 1/1 double-hung replacement window unit, separated by wood mullions and with brick lintel and sill. There are cantilevered brick brackets below the window which support a wood shelf. The second story of the central bay contains another large three-part replacement window directly above the one on the first floor. This window contains a stationary center sash, flanked by slider sash. It sits within a large shed dormer that is clad with aluminum siding.

A timber-framed porch makes up the left bay. The porch features paired wood posts at the corners with arched braces. This porch has been enclosed with metal-sash, 1/1 double-hung windows, and is framed beneath the windows with aluminum siding that matches the siding in the upper story dormer. There is

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one multi-flue chimney with corbelled top between the house and side porch, centered on the exterior wall. To the right of the chimney is a six-light door to the living room and to the left is a brick soldier-course lintel that indicates there may originally have been a window there. There is a built-in cupboard on the other side of this wall. The porch floor is stone outlined with brick and the ceiling is random-width tongue and groove boards. A metal screened door leads to the side yard from the porch.



East side enclosed porch
(left) and porch timber
framing detail (right)



The right (west) elevation has irregular window placement. The first floor has three openings: a nine-light wood door and two flanking 6/6 double-hung wood windows. This side door leads to the top of the basement stairs and to the kitchen. Above the door and slightly to the left is a 1/1 vinyl double-hung window. To the right and slightly higher is another 6/6 double-hung wood sash window. A 6/6 double-hung wood sash window pierces the gable apex.

The first floor rear elevation features a 6/6 wood-sash, double-hung window to the left of the rear porch and two 1/1 double-hung vinyl windows to the right. The shed-roofed porch is clad with aluminum siding and has windows on each side. The rear porch door is aluminum. There is a six-light wood door leading from the porch into the kitchen. The second story features a shed-roof dormer that is similar to the design of the front dormer. It is clad with aluminum siding and contains three 6/6 double-hung wood-sash windows.



West façade
(left) and
Rear (right)



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The interior is also reminiscent of the dark, Tudor style. Dark-stained wood wall paneling, wood floors and ceiling beams in the living room, and the stone fireplace next to the fireplace are common features. The first floor consists of a side entry hall, kitchen with a door to the rear yard, dining room with dark wainscoting, living room, and the enclosed porch off the living room. There is a small vestibule with a coat closet and a half bath off the stair landing. The stairway is on the right wall of the entry hall. The upper story contains two bedrooms and a full bath. Rooms are heated with radiators.

The front-gabled two-car detached garage is sheathed with aluminum siding and has a steeply pitched roof covered with composition shingles. The garage doors are aluminum. There is a single four-light window above the garage doors.

406 Great Falls Road has had some alterations. The front windows in the center bay of the front façade and a few other windows on other facades have been replaced with vinyl windows. The side porch has been enclosed, but the timber framing is intact. A window on the porch appears to have been filled in.

Aerial photograph
showing locations and
surroundings of
406 Great Falls Road
and 408 Great Falls Road



8. Significance

Inventory No. _____

Period	Areas of Significance	Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> health/medicine	<input type="checkbox"/> performing arts	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> invention	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-1999	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment/ recreation	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion	
<input type="checkbox"/> 2000-	<input type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> ethnic heritage	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science	
	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/ settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> social history	
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> community planning		<input type="checkbox"/> maritime history	<input type="checkbox"/> transportation	
	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation		<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> other: _____	

Specific dates _____

Architect/Builder _____

Brawner Harding. Builder

Construction dates c.1940

Evaluation for:

☐ National Register☐ Maryland Register☐ not evaluated

Prepare a one-paragraph summary statement of significance addressing applicable criteria, followed by a narrative discussion of the history of the resource and its context. (For compliance projects, complete evaluation on a DOE Form – see manual.)

Statement of Significance

The house at 406 Great Falls Road is a late example of revival-style period architectural design. The original environmental setting is intact, as is its massing and its footprint. There have been some alterations including the replacement of several windows, most notably the triplets on the first and second floors on the front façade, and the enclosure of the side porch (which is reversible). 406 and 408 Great Falls Road are remnants of the large and elaborate Rockville Heights subdivision, being built on originally platted lots in the 1930's. The Nicholson homes are historic markers of the Rockville Heights subdivision, before it was resubdivided and developed with split levels and ranch style homes. These two properties are associated with the Nicholson and Trail families, both large and prominent families, each with a long presence in Rockville and Montgomery County.

History and Support

Built c.1935, the house is a late example of the Tudor Revival style. The Tudor style was fading from national prominence by the late 1930s, after a resurgence of popularity in the 1920s and early 1930s. One of the largest concentrations of Tudor Revival homes in Montgomery County is in and near the Chevy Chase Historic District. There are other examples in Rockville, however, including 11 Wall Street and 149 South Adams Street in the West End, and 202 Frederick Avenue in Lincoln Park.

The Tudor Revival at 11 Wall Street was built c.1933 utilizing a design shown in the Sears, Roebuck and Co. Catalogue. It has a similar first floor plan as the subject house, and similar front and rear second floor dormers. It is a contributing resource to the West Montgomery Avenue Historic District. The house at 149 South Adams Street (c. 1931) is also similar, although it is stucco over frame and the enclosed side porch has much more horizontally pitched roof. Like 11 Wall Street, it has a second-story shed dormer that does not extend fully to the projecting gable. The shed dormer on the Tudor Revival example in Lincoln Park does extend to the projecting front gable, and is similar to the front dormer at 406 Great Falls Road. The indication is, for both these properties, that this extension of the front shed dormer is an alteration from the

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original dormer shape, which, in both cases, was probably more similar to the dormers at 11 Wall Street and 149 South Adams Street. In both of these cases, the three 6/6 double-hung windows in the dormer match the three 6/6 double-hung windows below at the first floor level.



11 Wall Street



149 S. Adams Street



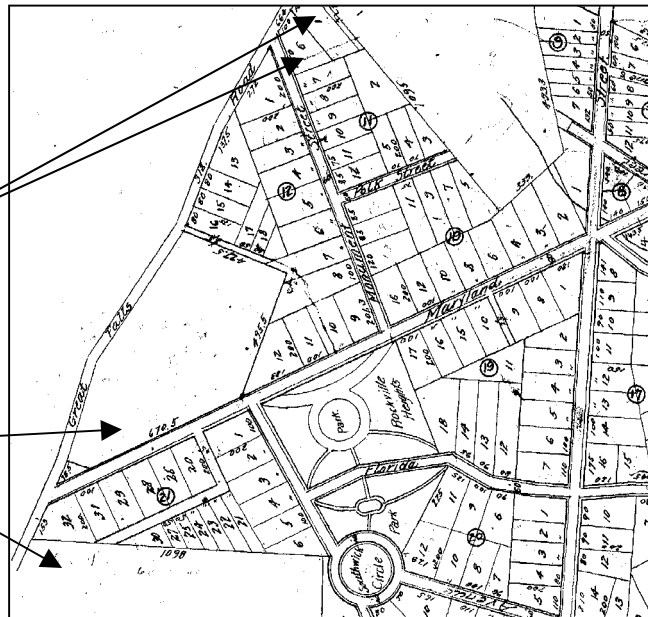
202 Frederick Avenue

The Rockville Heights subdivision was platted in 1890, with large lots, parks, boulevards and circles in anticipation of attracting upscale residential development. This subdivision created Maryland Avenue, Argyle Avenue, and Monument Street. Other rights-of-way, including Polk Street, and Florida and New York Avenues were later abandoned. The Rockville Heights subdivision was similar to the platted West End Park subdivision (1890), and to the first subdivision in East Rockville called Reading's First Addition to Rockville (1888). All of these subdivisions were platted with generous lots and picturesque roads, in the time-honored fashion of the late 19th century garden suburbs being built nationwide. These subdivisions were viewed as largely unsuccessful because they developed slowly. Many of the platted lots in all of these subdivisions remained vacant until well into the 20th century, and this is part of the history of the development of City of Rockville.

Detail from plat entered into land records as Rockville Heights at Liber JA19, folio 285, surveyed in 1889-1890

Platted lots for 406 Great Falls Road (right) and 408 Great Falls Road (left).

Trail property was located here



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The land for both 406 and 408 Great Falls Road was purchased by James Brawner Nicholson and his wife Mary Trail Nicholson from John Maury Dove and his wife Nannie Carter Dove according to deeds recorded on January 3, 1913 and on January 26, 1923.¹ J. Maury Dove moved to Washington, DC after selling the last of his Great Falls Road property to the Nicholsons and he died in 1924. His wife, a native of Rockville, died in 1929 in D.C. and is buried in Rock Creek Cemetery.²



Detail from 1949 F.H.M. Klinge Atlas of Property in Montgomery County Maryland showing Rose Hill Farm, Rockville Heights, and Great Falls Road. The Trail property was south of it between Maryland Avenue and Great Falls Roads and another 25-acre parcel on the right side of Great Falls Road.

James Brawner Nicholson was born in 1869, the son of Leonard Lispenard Nicholson and Susan C. Brawner. Leonard lived in Rockville since about 1905. James married Mary Trail at her family home in Rockville in 1906. Mary Trail was the daughter of Hezekiah and Elizabeth Trail who owned property along Great Falls Road. Hezekiah Trail was born in Rockville in 1845 and he and his wife are buried at

¹ Montgomery County Land Records 226/169; 234/46

² Montgomery Sentinel Newspaper, Genealogical Abstracts

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Rockville Cemetery. The Nicholsons had four children, one of whom, Elizabeth Brawner Nicholson, died in infancy. The remaining children were James Brawner Nicholson, Jr., William Trail Nicholson and Mary Forest Nicholson. James B. Nicholson, Sr. died in 1932 and is also buried at the Rockville Cemetery. His widow died in 1965.³

James Brawner Nicholson, Jr. was born October 6, 1908. He married Elizabeth Williams White who was the daughter of Dr. Elijah Wootton White and Florence Pyles in 1936. Their wedding announcement states that they were married in the bride's hometown of Poolesville and that the "bride and groom are well-known in the county and have a host of friends".⁴ Ushers included Charles Beard and William Bouic of Rockville. The couple lived in Washington, D.C. where James Jr. was employed before eventually returning to Rockville. They had no children. James died in 1979 and is buried in Monocacy. His widow, Elizabeth, is 95 years old and resides at a nursing home in Rockville. Her sister, Helen White, presently occupies the house at 408 Great Falls Road.

William Trail Nicholson married Amelia Somervell Farmer, daughter of Robert Watt Farmer of Redland in 1934 at his mother's home on the Trail family farm in Rockville. They did not have any children either.

Mary Forest Nicholson married Richard Theodore Culp from Silver Spring in 1943 and they lived in Annapolis. They had two sons, Richard T. Culp, Jr. and James Nicholson Culp. Mary Nicholson Culp still resides in Amberley, Annapolis.

The houses at 406 and 408 Great Falls Road were built for sons William and James Jr., respectively, after their marriages by local builder Brawner Harding. The brothers acquired the land by deed from their widowed mother on October 11, 1941.⁵ Mary Trail Nicholson's Last Will and Testament states that her personal effects were left to her daughter because she had "heretofore given to my said sons substantial sums for the acquisition of their homes."⁶ Mary T. Nicholson also left her three children her 35.774-acre farm on Falls Road (described as 13.334 acres within the City of Rockville and 22.44 acres in Rockville "outside") with single-family dwelling and various outbuildings, as well as her Washington, D.C. property.

Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation data shows that 406 Great Falls Road was built in 1945 and 408 was built in 1941. Both houses appear on the 1949 F.H.M Klinge Atlas of property in Montgomery County. Family history indicates that the houses were built earlier, perhaps in the late 1930s,

³ Nicholson Families, Our Maryland Heritage Series, Book 40, William Neal Hurley, Jr., 2002

⁴ Montgomery County Historical Society, Nicholson family file

⁵ Montgomery County Land Records 857/117; 857/116

⁶ Montgomery County Register of Wills, Case # 15,641, August 15, 1955

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and that 406 Great Falls Road was built before 408. If this is true, it would indicate that the houses were built before the land was deeded to each brother.

The Klinge Atlas shows Polk Street, Florida and New York Avenue still present in 1949. Dr. Dexter Bullard's Rose Hill property was directly across Great Falls Road. There were not many other houses in the immediate vicinity at the time and only a few pre-date the houses at 406 and 408 Great Falls Road. Immediately to the west and across Monument Avenue, 500 Great Falls Road, was built c. 1917 and 402 Great Falls to the immediate east of 406 was built c. 1931. Portions of Rockville Heights were later resubdivided and cul-de-sacs were added off Monument Street and adjacent Dale Drive.

406 Great Falls Road was purchased by its present owners in September 2003 and has been unoccupied since that time. It was sold by Richard Theodore Culp, brother-in-law of James Jr. and William.⁷ The property was conveyed to Culp from the estate of William T. Nicholson on May 2, 2002.⁸ On July 16, 2001, Culp acted as grantor, representing the estate of William Nicholson, in conveying 466 square feet (0.011 acre) of the property to the Maryland State Highway Administration for improvements to Great Falls Road in conjunction with the Rose Hill residential development on the north side of Great Falls Road.

⁷ Montgomery County Land Record 25434/450

⁸ Montgomery County Land Record 857/117

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9. Major Bibliographical References

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Maryland Department of Assessments and Taxation Records, Montgomery County Plat and Land Records, Montgomery County Register of Wills, 1949 FF.H.M. Klinge Atlas or Real Estate in Montgomery County, City of Rockville Utility Service Records, Nicholson Families/Trail Families, Our Maryland Heritage Series, William Neal Hurley, 2002.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of surveyed property _____ 1.569 acres _____

Acreage of historical setting _____

Quadrangle name _____

Quadrangle scale: _____

Verbal boundary description and justification

Monument Park, Tax Map GR22, P629

11. Form Prepared by

name/title	Cindy Kebba		
organization	City of Rockville	date	November 2005
street & number		telephone	
city or town		state	

The Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
DHCD/DHCP
100 Community Place
Crownsville, MD 21032-2023
410-514-7600

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